United Nations

Daily Highlights

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F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

+ Security Council holds consultations concerning Secretary-General's recommendations to deploy 3,500 United Nations security personnel in Somalia at estimated cost of $129.2 million for six-month period; two United Nations military observers wounded by gunfire in southern part of Mogadishu.

+ Secretary-General confers with top aides in London following Conference on former Yugoslavia.

+ Repatriation-rate of Cambodians from Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia is rising steadily, according to UNHCR; 100,000 Cambodians have returned home since 30 March.

+ Fourth Asian and Pacific Population Conference ends in Bali with adoption of Declaration urging countries in region to incoorporate population and environment into efforts to achieve sustainable development.

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The Security Council held consultations this afternoon on the addendum to the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Somalia, dated 28 August, which contains his cost estimates for the establishment of four operational zones and for a 3,500-man increase in the strength of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM).

The Secretary-General wrote in his addendum, that should the Security Council agree to the proposed increase in the strength of UNOSOM, it was estimated that the overall cost, for a six month period beginning 1 September through 28 February 1993, would amount to some $129.2 million. Thereafter, it was estimated that the monthly cost would be approximately $12.1 million. The Secretary-General further recommended in the addendum, that the additional cost relating the to enlargement of UNOSOM should be considered an expense of the Organization to be borne by Member States.

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For information media—not an official record

The Council was scheduled to hold a formal meeting following consultations.

Meanwhile, a United Nations spokeswoman confirmed today that two United Nations military observers had been wounded by gunfire while driving in an unarmed but clearly marked United Nations vehicle in the southern part of Mogadishu.

An Egyptian soldier was shot in the shoulder and a Czechoslovak soldier driving the vehicle had suffered head wounds. A Finnish soldier who was in the vehicle at the time of the attack was not wounded. Both injured soldiers were treated locally before evacuation by plane to Nairobi.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali spent today in London working with his top aides on the follow-up modalities for the implementation of the various documents that came out of the International Conference on the Former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia which concluded yesterday.

The Secretary-General conferred with Cyrus Vance, Special Representative for Yugoslavia, and Under-Secretaries-General Marrack Goulding and Vladimir Petrovsky. He was also working on the final draft of his annual report to the General Assembly. The meetings will continue throughout the day today and tomorrow (Saturday) before the Secretary-General's leaves for Jakarta, Indonesia, where he will be attending the tenth Summit of the Non-aligned Movement, next week.

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The number of Cambodians repatriated from camps in Thailand and from Indonesia and Malaysia surpassed 100,000 today, marking an important milestone in the voluntary return programme begun by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) five months ago, according to a UNHCR press release today.

A ceremony hosted by the UNHCR and chaired by Norodom Sihanouk, President of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia, and Yasushi Akashi, the Secretary-General's Special Representative, was held when the "Sisophon Express" arrived from the Thai border today with some 1,200 returnees aboard.

Speaking at the ceremony, UNHCR Special Envoy Sergio Vieira de Mello said the Cambodian repatriation programme gave cause for optimism in view of the other humanitarian tragedies confronting the UNHCR around the world.

While approximately 250,000 Cambodian refugees remain in camps outside the country, the rate of repatriation has been rising steadily since the first returnees crossed the Thai-Cambodian border on 30 March. The rate of return is expected to increase even more in November when the rains end.

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In Bali, Indonesia, the Fourth Asian and Pacific Population Conference has ended with the adoption of the "Bali Declaration", which urged countries in the region to "make a firm political and financial commitment fully to incorporate population and environmental concerns into all national efforts to achieve sustainable development".

The nine-day Conference, which began on 19 August, was organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to review the region's population situation and to provide Governments with policy guidelines for population and sustainable development into the next century. It was attended by ministers and other high-ranking officials from 36 nations.

Commenting on the Bali Declaration, ESCAP Executive Secretary Rafeeuddin Ahmed said the decisions taken by the Conference had put a strong and unmistakable emphasis on poverty alleviation, the interaction between population, the environment and consumption, and the strategic linkages between population and sustainable development.

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